

DRAFT
CITY COMMISSION/CRA WORKSHOP MEETING
MAY 2, 2022
4:30 P.M.

This Commission Meeting was conducted utilizing Communications Media Technology. Some Staff members were present in the Commission Chambers while others were present via the Zoom application to respect the social distancing guidelines.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Tambra Varnadore, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 2 – entered 4:35 p.m.
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2 – entered 4:58 p.m.
Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Xavier Colon, Interim CRA Director
Jim Freeman, City Clerk (Not Present)
Cheryl Miller, Finance Director
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk (Not Present)
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Mayor Bryant opened the Commission Workshop at 4:31 p.m.

1. Half Cent Infrastructure Project List (C.Miller/M.Rayan)

Cheryl Miller, Finance Director, introduced the annual Infrastructure Project List. The only changes to the Project list included four new paving projects, found on page 4 under Transportation. Current paving projects were also included on that page. The Infrastructure Project List was also on the 7:00 p.m. meeting for approval. Ms. Miller reminded Commissioners that the Department Heads will be assembling their budgets this summer and this would be an appropriate time to make their requests known.

Commissioner Williams asked how much ARPA money has been designated. Ms. Miller replied that the Finance Department has identified the \$6.8 million the City is receiving and staff will be presenting the allocation during the next Commission Workshop scheduled May 23, 2022. Half of the ARPA funds have been received, and the balance should be arriving in September.

Commissioner Smith asked about Ward I Phase III funding, and wanted to be reassured again that there will be sufficient funding for the Palmetto Police Dept. Mr. Rayan clarified that paving funds come from ½ Cent Sales Tax, ARPA, CIP and Road & Bridge sources.

City Commission Meeting

May 2, 2022

Page 2 of 3

2. CRA- Alternative Recreation Site (X.Colon)

Mr. Colon reopened the discussion following the Commissions' request to relocate the recreation courts in order to renovate the Woman's Club as a cultural site in Lamb Park. Alternate recreation sites included specifically 14th Ave W. Park and the current Police Department.

Mr. Colon reviewed regulation court sizing to insure there would be adequate space.

Basketball	50' x 94'	\$55,000
Tennis (doubles)	78' x 36'	\$50,000
Pickleball	30' x 60'	\$45,000

Mr. Colon stated there will be other expenses to consider such as fencing, lighting, CEPTED, parking and Stormwater. Mr. Colon shared how the 14th Avenue West Park would hold 2 basketball courts, 4 regulation tennis courts and 4 pickleball courts. There are currently no bathroom facilities at this site. There would also be easy parking and street access. Unfortunately, the 14th Avenue property is not within the CRA so the funding would be the responsibility of the City.

The other location being considered is the current Palmetto Police Department. The east end is large enough for 2 regulation basketball courts, plus tennis courts are already nearby on 10th Avenue. We could expand in phased development. These courts would be visible from the road, there would be street side parking and stormwater pavers could be installed to help meet stormwater demands.

Commissioner Varnadore asked if existing tennis courts could be marked for pickleball. The 4 current Palmetto Elementary tennis courts maintained by the County might be able to support 2 pickleball courts, without getting too close to the road. Commissioner Varnadore opined the police department property would be too small, and she does not support adding courts to the 17th Street Park at all. Finance Director, Ms. Miller stated ARPA funds could be used for 14th Avenue park development.

Commissioner Varnadore inquired about an update on the old elementary school property and CSX property.

Commissioner Williams asked if there was a desired number of courts for the City. Mr. Colon stated we do not want to remove courts before we have replacement courts in place. The CRA plans to continue with Lincoln Park courts, but is also hoping to add centralized courts. Commissioner Williams asked about the baseball diamond on 14th Avenue. Mr. Colon continued that Lamb Park was not considered because he understood the Commission wanted Lamb Park to be more of a festival location than have ball courts.

Commissioner Jones was not supportive of the 14th Avenue location. He opined it would be better to put basketball courts at Sutton and Lamb. Mr. Colon stated the residents around Sutton Park were not in favor of basketball courts, plus there is also a concern of tree removal. He continued that the City has current "park" spaces, so residents have an expectation of recreation.

Commissioner Jones felt 14th Avenue West was reserved for cemetery overflow.

Commissioner Smith echoed that 14th Avenue West is not a park, it is overflow for the graveyard. He expressed how easy it would be to turn the stage at Sutton Park by just relocating the railings.

Commissioner Williams recalled that 14th Avenue West was not specifically designated as overflow for the graveyard. He felt basketball near the Sutton stage would be too close to the playground, and continued that several Sutton Park trees were planted as a memorial. Commissioner Williams asked for a size and value comparison of properties at 14th Ave, the old elementary school, and the existing Police Department.

City Commission Meeting

May 2, 2022

Page 3 of 3

Mayor Bryant reminded everyone that 10th Avenue is supposed to be multimodal economic corridor.

Commissioner Varnadore does not support ARPA funds for Ward I. Ms. Miller restated the ARPA list will be reviewed at the next workshop meeting May 23rd. Chief Tyler said the City requested \$650,000 in ARPA funds for radios and body cameras. Tallahassee has limitations on where the ARPA funds can be spent.

Mr. Colon reminded the Board that as the Community Redevelopment Agency, they are trying to improve life, build housing, and incentivize development to bring funding into the City. The CRA wants to balance long-term maintenance projects with projects that improve profit because in 20 years the cost will belong solely to the City.

Commissioner Smith asked for the deed to 14th Avenue West Park to verify if the land was donated for the specific purpose of graveyard overflow.

Commissioner Williams questioned purchasing playground equipment at MLK Park, which was established as a passive park, and built without designated parking.

Commissioner Varnadore said the 14th Avenue land was donated with the intent to have graveyard overflow but there was no paperwork to restrict. She agreed that parks do not produce revenue, but parks enhance the way of life for our community.

Commissioner Smith feels he is unable to hear something at 4:30 p.m. and be expected to vote at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Cornwell requested the value of each piece of property if it were to be something other than a park. She inquired what would be the draw if the City were to build homes near Heartland and the old Police Department. Currently, 7-Eleven and Pelican Snoball are near the parks, if we chose the Palmetto Elementary location.

Commissioner Williams likes 14th Avenue West but feels it will be a \$2-3 million investment and wanted more information before making the decision.

Commissioner Varnadore asked what the City plans to do with the old Palmetto Elementary property. Mayor Bryant answered that the City has always intended to surplus the property and put it back on the tax rolls.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: MAY 23, 2022

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK